CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

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ITALY

Working Paper setting forth suggestions for the adoption of an organic disarmament programme

1. In resolution A/RES/2454B (XXIII) the General Assembly requested the Conference "to make renewed efforts towards achieving substantial progress in reaching agreement on the question of general and complete disarmament under effective international control, and urgently to analyze the plans already under consideration and others that might be put forward to see how in particular rapid progress could be made in the field of nuclear disarmament".

2. Hence the adoption of agreements on effective disarmament measures remains the basic aim of the work of the Eighteen-Nation Conference.

3. It has to be noted that since 1962 (when the United States and the Soviet Union submitted their respective plans for general and complete disarmament) no effective disarmament measure has been adopted.

4. This is probably due to the fact that in 1962 it was thought that the process of general and complete disarmament could be initiated by immediate measures for the reduction of armaments. But experience has shown that disarmament must be "prepared" in an adequate manner and that the preparation itself of this process must, from the beginning, form the subject of a plan.

5. The Italian delegation therefore believes that in order to give a new impetus to the disarmament negotiations it is necessary to proceed on the basis of a plan or programme containing, on the one hand, the elements which must precede the disarmament process or serve to prepare for it, and, on the other hand, the methods of its implementation.

6. The Italian delegation considers that, in order to prepare for the disarmament process and to open the way thereto, it is necessary at the same time: (a) to halt the nuclear arms race, (b) to create a climate of confidence, (c) to undertake studies on concrete measures that will make it possible to reduce armaments and armed forces.

Furthermore, in order to make possible the complete implementation of a disarmament process, it is necessary to establish guidelines which should be provided for and laid down from the start.

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7. If the usefulness of this approach is recognized, it is necessary to envisage the conclusion of an agreement on an organic programme aimed at defining: (a) the content of the preparatory phase, and (b) the guidelines which are to govern the subsequent process of disarmament.

8. As regards the preparatory phase, it will be a matter, in particular, of determining the measures which it should comprise in order to achieve the aforementioned aims, namely, the halting of the nuclear arms race, the creation of a climate of mutual confidence and a study of concrete measures for arms reduction. The Italian delegation has already expressed its opinion in this regard and hopes that other delegations will also make their views known. In particular, the Italian delegation believes that the halting of the nuclear arms race must be regarded as an integral problem, the various aspects of which are interdependent. This is tantamount to recognizing that there is a link between the various measures to be adopted in this field, although this does not mean that agreement concerning a given measure must necessarily be subject to the conclusion of an agreement on other measures. Some degree of flexibility is necessary in practice.

9. As regards the determination of guidelines for the disarmament process as a whole, the Italian delegation believes that it could be based on the principles agreed as long ago as September 1961 between the United States and Soviet Governments. These principles, brought up to date and supplemented as far as possible, could be reproduced within the framework of a joint declaration by the Eighteen-Nation Conference.

For example, the original texts could be supplemented by stating:

(a) that the process of general and complete disarmament shall take place in a preparatory phase and in three successive phases of arms reduction until it is completed;

(b) that the three phases of arms reduction may be negotiated separately: the first phase simultaneously with the implementation of the preparatory phase; the second simultaneously with the implementation of the first; and the third simultaneously with the implementation of the second;

(c) that reductions in all categories of nuclear and conventional weapons shall be progressive, from the first phase onwards.

10. With regard to the stages of negotiation, the Italian delegation suggests, for its part, the following programme of work:

- to undertake immediate negotiations on an organic disarmament programme;
- to carry on, at the same time, negotiations on partial disarmament measures that have already been considered previously"
- after the conclusion of an agreement on a general programme, and after obtaining concrete results in the field of partial measures(which are an essential part of the preparatory phase), to begin negotiations on the first phase of the disarmament process.

11. The Italian delegation will be grateful to other delegations for any suggestions they may wish to put forward in regard to the points submitted for their consideration.